

Your Honor,

You must decide, in your soul and conscience, the future of my cousin Patrice regarding his criminal acts, for which he was accused in his professional capacity.

Although very close due to our kinship and the unwavering closeness of our respective fathers, we never discussed the nature or extent of his sales activities of astrological products, so I do not opine upon the veracity of the accusations or on the seriousness of the facts with which he is accused.

I would like to send you this letter because I am his closest cousin and I have the ability, having practiced head and neck cancer surgery for more than twenty-five years, to know how to understand human nature. I would therefore like, through my testimony, to enlighten you on Patrice's deepest personality so that, knowing the causes, you have additional elements in order to make the sentence as fair and equitable as possible, for it will decide his future.

Due on the one hand to the proximity of our fathers, which gave us the opportunity to see each other quite often despite the distance, and on the other hand to our minor age difference (a little more than two years) Patrice has always been my favorite and beloved cousin.

When I was very young, this American cousin fascinated me with his many facets, his humanity and his courage in the face of adversity.

Following the divorce of his parents, Patrice was entrusted with his two brothers and his sister to the care of his mother in Canada. At a very young age he had to take on the role of head of the family, his mother suffering from schizophrenia and living in Canada on a meager alimony sent by his father, who worked in Africa for the United Nations. This function was even more necessary after the extremely serious accident which left his beloved little sister permanently disabled and which deeply affected him and his two brothers. He then strived to ensure the cohesion of the home for his siblings, playing a role that he should never have had to play at such a young age.

When we were pre-teens, during one of his stays in France in the house in Jura where we spent our family vacations, we discovered and took in an injured baby hedgehog. For several days, we gave him all the care we thought necessary; Patrice even got up try to feed him and give him affection. Despite our vigilance, the little creature died...it was then that I discovered, beyond the sensitivity of my cousin ready to move heaven and earth to save the hedgehog, this strange and somewhat mystical side that he already had. He had written a mysterious text which he read

during the funeral ceremony, which he had forced us to participate in before we buried our hedgehog friend at the foot of the oldest tree in the garden.

When we were aged 17 and 19, we visited Northern Europe at low cost with our friend Antoine thanks to the InterRail youth discount card. We had a very small budget which required us to sleep under the stars and only eat one real meal per day. During our stay in Copenhagen we made friends with a French homeless man, a former drug addict, who slept under bridges with his two dogs. During our two weeks there, we slept on a beach located 45 minutes from downtown Copenhagen, where we went every day by train after taking care to hide our backpacks in the thickets.

Almost every day Patrice insisted that we come and chat with this "new friend" and give him and his two dogs some food and a little money. His generosity was not limited to that: as soon as he came across a beggar, especially if he was accompanied by a pet, we could not stop him from giving them coins.

The day we left for Stockholm we discovered that Patrice had almost no money left on him! As soon as we arrived in Sweden, we had to call our grandfather, with whom Patrice was staying when he was in France, so that he could urgently send us money via Western Union.

More recently, during a stay in the mountains with his friends, our eldest son Thomas seriously injured his knee and found himself stranded in Bourg-Saint-Maurice.

Following his hospitalization, my wife and I being unable to travel due to our respective professional requirements, we tried to have him repatriated by ambulance. Unfortunately none of the ambulance companies we contacted were willing to cover the journey to Ardèche. I was complaining about this problem on the phone to my cousin who, at that time, was living in Switzerland, and, without even considering it and despite my denials, without hesitation jumped in his car and made the journey of several hours to get to Bourg-Saint-Maurice. From there he traveled, again, three hours by road to bring him back to us in Ardèche. This mishap still allowed us to spend a very pleasant evening together, before he hit the road again the next day to return to his family.

I could cite a number of other "anecdotes" attesting to the intense, sometimes even excessive or even slightly "bizarre" or esoteric side of my cousin Patrice but which above all demonstrate that he is a whole man, with limitless courage, equipped with great sensitivity and a heart of gold, always ready to give of himself to help others.

I beg you to take into account these facets of his personality when you pronounce the sentence that seems appropriate to you, because I can assure you that even if he committed an offense, it was without doubt without any desire to cause harm to anyone. Know that the man you are going to judge is animated by great humanity and that he holds a very big place in my heart, that of my wife and my children.

Please accept, your Honor, this expression of my respectful greetings.

Olivier Runner